



Admirals,
Adventurers
and
Able Seamen

by

HARRISON BROWN

100

ADMIRALS, ADVENTURERS and ABLE SEAMEN

Forgotten stories about places on our
British Columbia coast and how they
got their names.

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by

HARRISON BROWN

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*Some to the fascination of a name
Surrender judgment hoodwink'd . . .*
—COWPER

THE EARLY EXPLORERS

Juan de Fuca	1592
Perez	1774
Cook	1778
Eliza and Narvaez	1791
Galiano and Valdes	1792
Vancouver	1792-94

*Illustrations by Jack Grundle
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Some Were Famous!

This is new land. Less than 200 years ago it was unknown to the white man. Over in Europe, where the first explorers came from, every mountain and river has been known for centuries. In Asia, facing us across the Pacific, Man has been making and recording his history for thousands of years. But in these waters no ocean-going vessel had sailed until 1774, with one exception—Juan de Fuca's.

Some of the story of what happened afterwards has been scrawled in the queer names scattered along our shores. Nowhere in the world has there been such haphazard naming of geographical features; from gay to solemn, from seamen to saints. There are capes named after racehorses, bays after battles, and a whole group of islands called after characters in an old novel by Dickens. Pirates, poets, politicians, actresses and auctioneers have all been "immortalized" by having named after them places they never saw. There is also, of course, a long list of places called after ships that have passed, and after people whose names have disappeared from their tombstones, but still live on the charts.

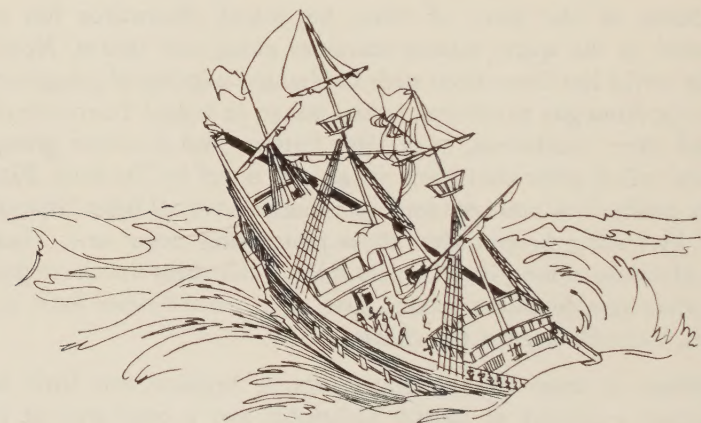
Most of those we will forget about, because this little book is neither a history of British Columbia nor a catalogue of place names. It is just a reminder that behind the most commonplace name there is often a story—and then sometimes, too, a place simply has to be mentioned because it lies right athwart our course, as it were, and so, if omitted, would constitute a danger to such literary navigation as we are embarked upon.

Active Pass, for example, which twists so interestingly between Mayne and Galiano Islands, is known to all day-time travellers between Vancouver and Victoria. The story of its name is less exciting than the passage itself, which was called after U.S.S. *Active*, a small 750 ton American revenue vessel. She was a wooden paddle steamer and was the first naval steamer to use the Pass, which her captain, Lieutenant Commander James Alden, named after his ship.

In Days of Sail

Sir Francis Drake was the first Englishman to circumnavigate the globe. He was also the first white man to set foot on the Pacific coast above the 42nd parallel, which is today the northern boundary of California; but Drake never got as far north as present British Columbia.

The earliest links in the history of our coast are with the Spanish explorers, and one of the first links of all is commemorated in the name of one of the coast's most important features, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, entrance from the Pacific Ocean to Puget Sound and the Gulf of Georgia. It is a strange story. To begin with, the Spanish-sounding name was given the Strait by an Englishman, which was



unusual. Thirdly, the very existence of the channel was denied for most of those two hundred years, and, to cap it all, Juan de Fuca was not a Spaniard at all, but a Greek!

This early wanderer first appears in history in a book published in 1625 by an Englishman named Michael Lok, who met de Fuca in Genoa, Italy. The old man told Lok that for years he had been in the service of the Spaniards in their Central American colonies. According to him the Spanish Governor of Mexico in 1592 had given him command of a vessel and ordered him to sail north and see what he could find.

He sailed up the coast and eventually came, to quote from Lok's book: "To a broad inlet of sea between 47° and 48° latitude. He entered thereinto, sailing therein more than 20 days and found land trending sometimes N.W. and N. and upon a very much broader sea than was at the said entrance, and that he passed by divers islands".

De Fuca told Lok that the Spanish took no interest in his report when he returned to Mexico and, to add insult to injury, would not even pay him for his trouble. He quit in disgust and somehow got back to Europe, where he moped in poverty until chance enabled him to pour out his story to the Englishman. Lok's book, however, does not appear to have impressed the English any more than de Fuca's story had impressed the Spanish Governor. It became a legend, as Captain Cook called it when he actually sailed across the mouth of the channel without realizing it was there.

The Famous Captain Cook

So another queer sea story links up. Here was the famous Captain James Cook, "the father of British hydrography", one of the most intrepid and justly famous explorers in history, overlooking what seems to us now to be one of the most conspicuous features of the whole coast. But then of course few of us have ever tried to go anywhere by sail, and none of us have sailed uncharted seas, even in large ships. And there were no large ships in those days.

It was really just bad luck which prevented Cook from adding the Strait of Juan de Fuca to his list of discoveries. He had made his second voyage round South Africa and across the Pacific, and he came sailing up the coast until he reached the Olympic Peninsula. There his two little ships were repeatedly driven back from a prominent cape he was trying to make. In humourous exasperation he named it Cape Flattery because, as he said, "it flattered him in coaxing him to seek an entrance which he couldn't make".

That Cape marks the entrance to the "legendary" channel which Cook never saw, for he was never able to approach land there. Rough seas and high winds drove him out to sea again and he went on up the west coast of Vancouver Island without, of course, know-

ing that it was an island. A week or so later, on March 29th, 1778, he discovered Nootka Sound and charted it on his map. Then he continued northward until he ran into ice floes in Alaska, but to the end of his days the old sea dog barked with contempt at what he called "the damned de Fuca legend".

Cook had stayed two months at Nootka and while there had made friends with the Indians. They implored him to come back, and promised to trade any quantity of furs for the tools and metal cooking pots which they coveted. The word got around and soon traders appeared on the coast in other small vessels. Among the first was Captain Charles Barkley, a great old character in his own right, after whom Barkley Sound was later named. He re-discovered the passage between the future Vancouver Island and Washington State. He, too, had heard the de Fuca legend and, finding the old Greek's description and latitude fitted, named it after its original discoverer. And so, long after he had departed this world, Juan de Fuca's name lived again and will live, no doubt, as long as charts are printed, for the Strait has become one of the world's famous ocean highways.

In view both of his character and his importance in history, it is curious that Cook's name appears only once on the charts of this coast. None of his contemporaries put his name on the map, not even Vancouver, who immortalized so many aristocratic nonentities. Yet Vancouver was with Cook as a midshipman on this last voyage which mapped the Sandwich Isles, Cape Flattery, Nootka and so many other places. And he was, of course, still with the expedition when Cook was killed in an encounter with the Kanakas of the Sandwich Islands the following year. Indeed, Vancouver himself nearly suffered the same fate the very next day.

The Eighteenth Century was a period of autocracy in Europe, but it was also the age in which the high walls of privilege began to be breached by the battering ram of the democratic idea. The neglect of this formidable character, James Cook, may to some extent have been due to the fact that he was, in the most literal sense, a self-made man. He owed nothing either to birth or to influence. He was born the son of an agricultural laborer in the north of England and he began life as a haberdasher's assistant. He may not have dropped his aitch's but he must certainly have talked with a Yorkshire accent!

Cook went to sea in a collier when he was 18 years old and by sheer ability worked up to be mate on another merchant vessel. He then volunteered into the Navy as an able seaman and within two years had obtained a Master's warrant. He was with Wolfe at the famous capture of Quebec and he surveyed the coasts of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. All this before he had even begun to explore the unknown.

Cook was the first to discover that New Zealand is composed of two large islands and the first to chart part of the coast of Australia, which he named New South Wales. Both countries were claimed by him for the British Crown. He made another discovery, too, which was more important to sailors at the time than half a dozen Australias. He found how to prevent and cure scurvy by the use of fresh fruit and vegetables, for in those days scurvy was the dreaded scourge of long voyages.

The one place in these parts which bears the name of this remarkable man is Cape Cook, a bold promontory on the west coast of Vancouver Island which Cook himself had named Woody Point. Even this naming was not made until 1860, by a later hydrographer named Captain Richards.

Nootka was not quite the first naming in these parts but for many years it was the only one people heard about. It was world famous among mariners as being one of the few safe anchorages on a treacherous coast. The west coast of Vancouver Island is like a beautiful but ill-tempered woman, at its best magnificent, but infernal all the rest of the time. It provides everything calculated to provoke curses from the most saintly of sailors. There are shoals and reefs and thousands of off-shore islands, some no larger than rocks. It can whip up terrific gales or settle into fog for weeks on end and it has a phenomenally indented and often steep shoreline, backed by bush so dense that even experienced woodsmen have died in it a few miles from a settlement. When Captain Cook discovered and named Nootka Sound he really had something. For those days anyhow. Few ships ever visit it nowadays; from being the only known spot in B.C., it has become one of the least known. It is a ghost place from the days of sail.

First Came The Spanish

The first man to name landmarks on the British Columbia coast was the Spanish captain, Juan Perez, in July 1774. Most of the names he bestowed were after saints or his shipmates, and have since been replaced by English names, but one is still prominent and can be heard every day on the weather forecasts. Perez named Estevan Point after the Second Lieutenant on his corvette *Santiago*. The officer's name was Estevan Jose Martinez, and it was he who started the quarrel between England and Spain which was later to be settled by Vancouver and Quadra.

There was a tradition among the Indians of the district that it was off Estevan Point that their people first saw a white man's ship. According to them "the vessel was seen far at sea from the village of Oum-mis, near what is now shown on the chart as Hole in the Wall. On first sighting her the Indians thought it was an immense bird, but when she came nearer and they could see people on board, the Indians thought that the vessel was some wonderful and very large canoe come back from the land of the dead with their bygone chiefs. At last the ship came close to shore, when the Indians found to their amazement that they were not dead chiefs but entire strangers in color and appearance." The vessel is believed to have been the *Santiago* of Juan Perez.

The first man to explore the Gulf of Georgia was the able Spanish naval officer Lieutenant Francisco Eliza, who re-occupied Nootka in 1790 and wintered there. The following year he and Don Jose Narvaez sailed through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and up the east coast of Vancouver Island.

Many of the Gulf Islands owe their present names to this expedition. Among them are San Juan, Orcas and Lopez Islands on the American side and, north of the International Boundary, Gabriola, Saturna, Lasqueti and Texada, the largest of them all. The Ballenas Islands, near Nanaimo, were called thus after the large number of whales seen there.

The present Nanaimo Harbour and its various bays were called by Eliza "Bocas de Winterhuysen", after a Spanish officer killed later at the battle of Cape St. Vincent. This name gradually withered away and the place became known as Nanaimo. Eliza and most of his crew fell sick with scurvy so that Narvaez did much of the naming

but he, too, had to turn back near what is now Comox. The last place he named was Cape Lazo, which the Spanish originally called "Punto de Lazo de la Vega". The literal translation is "Point Snare of the Plain" and apparently it was so called because when approached from the eastward, the Cape has a long flat appearance with a bump at the end, reminding the Spaniards of the traps used to catch animals in those days.

There were three exploring expeditions in the Gulf of Georgia during the summer of 1792 and they were all naming places. Of the three, Commander Jacinto Caamano has left least trace of his passage, but up in Hecate Strait there is a large island which he called Aristazabal, a name as pleasant to the ears as it is intriguing.

The other expeditions were those of Vancouver and Broughton, in *Discovery* and *Chatham*, and Galiano and Valdes in their schooners *Sutil* and *Mexicana*. The British and Spanish explorers became friends in spite of friction between their governments at home, and several times their ships anchored for the night close enough to permit exchange of visits. Perhaps loneliness had something to do with it. In one sense at least they were all in the same boat, for all of them were thousands of miles and some years from home. Incidentally, this was the last Spanish exploring expedition on the coast. Thirteen years later both Galiano and Valdes were to fight at the Battle of Trafalgar and both lost their ships to the British; but by then their friend Vancouver was dead.

As the four little ships proceeded northward, it is probable that Vancouver came to some arrangement with Galiano and Valdes, for they saw the same places and seem to have divided the naming of them. Thus the Spanish called Cortez Island after the conqueror of Mexico and named Redonda Island on account of its shape. Malaspina Inlet was named after an Italian explorer then in the service of Spain. Beautiful Toba Inlet, east of Redonda, got its name owing to a mistake. A curious table (tabla) of planks carved with Indian hieroglyphics was found there and the name Canal de la Tabla was charted, but the Spanish engraver marked it "toba" in error and the name stuck. Farther north Goletas Channel in Queen Charlotte Sound was called after their ships, "goletas" being Spanish for "schooners".

Captain George Vancouver

It is unlikely that Vancouver ever suspected that the places he named so casually would one day become world famous. In those days they were so far from all that meant home, so much at the ends of the earth. Certainly he can never have dreamed that he was writing names in letters so large that they would never be forgotten, and his own among the most celebrated. There is no record that Vancouver ever named anything after himself, except the largest island on the coast of North America, and he only claimed half of that name. But for his friends it was different.



Vancouver was a daring seaman and a great explorer but he did not let his imagination run riot when it came to naming places. Burrard Inlet, Point Atkinson, Port Neville and many more were named by Vancouver after people whose only claim to fame was that he knew them. One contemporary of his (who had apparently been overlooked!) wrote sourly about this: "It were well for one coveting easy immortality to be a friend of Captain Vancouver about this time, the aboriginal owners and occupants being, like earlier Spanish navigators, wholly ignored in this naming". That was going too far. If he did not actually bestow Indian or Spanish names, Vancouver was less guilty than others, after him in changing such titles to English ones.

Vancouver was born at King's Lynn, Norfolk, in 1757. Englishmen may not believe it but King's Lynn was then the third largest

seaport in the country and Vancouver's father was collector of customs there. Years later the explorer named the Lynn Canal, which connects Juneau with Skagway, after his birthplace. Point Bridget and Berners Bay in the same passage were named after his mother and Couverden Point after the little town in Holland where his father's ancestors lived. Several other bays and capes in what is now Alaska were named by him after villages in Norfolk, and Sarah Point, about fifty miles north of Vancouver, he called after his elder sister.

Vancouver went to sea when he was 15 years old and first visited this coast in 1778, with Captain Cook in the *Resolution*. It was after this voyage that he used to say jokingly, that he had been nearer to the South Pole than any other man because, when impenetrable ice forced Cook to tack about, he, Vancouver, had gone to the very end of the bowsprit and, waving his hat to the southward, had shouted "ne plus ultra!" His own famous expedition to the Pacific northwest in command of the *Discovery* and *Chatham* lasted from 1792 until 1794. He came out via the Cape of Good Hope, Australia, New Zealand and the Sandwich Isles, now known as Hawaii. He then commenced the surveying of the whole intricate coastline of what is now Washington, British Columbia and Alaska. The great naming spree was on.

In addition to putting his civilian friends on the map, Vancouver was even more generous in using the names of his fellow officers. None of these people are any longer of interest to the world at large but in many cases the names are now so familiar that, when mentioned, we see the place and forget that it was once a person. Mt. Rainier (14,408 ft.) does not remind us of Admiral Peter Rainier, R.N., but of the "snowy round-topped mountain" Vancouver saw when he named it. When we look at the beautiful pyramid of Mt. Baker (10,750 ft.) we do not think of Joseph Baker, R.N., but of that "very conspicuous object discovered this afternoon by my third lieutenant and in compliment to him called Mt. Baker".

Others among his shipmates were also immortalized. Puget Sound was named after Peter Puget, Second Lieutenant on the *Discovery*, who examined that inlet in May 1792, and Cape Mudge, at the southern tip of Quadra Island, after the ship's First Lieutenant, Zachary Mudge. Point Atkinson, with its lighthouse perched on a rock and passed by all outward-bound vessels soon after the First Narrows Bridge, is one of Vancouver's "guest book" namings,

but a rather mysterious one since he only records it as "after a particular friend". Point Grey, directly opposite, where the University of British Columbia now stands, was named by Vancouver after another officer in the British Navy.

Between the two points lies Spanish Banks, so called because it was there that Vancouver first ran across his rival Spanish explorers, Captains Galiano and Valdes. They were anchored there as the British ships passed on their way to survey Burrard Inlet and Howe Sound. It was at this time that the Strait of Georgia got its name. Vancouver called it the Gulf of Georgia and so does everyone else to this day. Only the makers of charts persist in calling it the Strait, not, we may suspect, because it really is a strait, but to support the reputation of one of their number! For it was Captain Richards, seventy years after Vancouver, who changed the gulf to strait.

Vancouver, of course, named the gulf after his king, George III, the same king who "lost" the American colonies and is thus, in a way, responsible for the United States. As often happened, the Spanish had given it another name a year earlier. Lieutenant Eliza of the Spanish navy had called it "Gran Canal de Nuestra Senora del Rosario la Marinera", which at least means that he did not print his own charts.

Like the British, the Spaniards were given to naming places after people they knew, or after saints whom they presumably hoped they would know. But sometimes they showed more imagination. Burrard Inlet was named by Vancouver after his friend Sir Harry Burrard and it is safe to say that few of those who have lived on the Inlet have had any idea who he was. Eliza, one year ahead of Vancouver, had named it Boca de Florida Blanco. Today that would be no more appropriate than "Burrard", since it means "Inlet of the White Flowers" and the dogwoods the Spaniards saw are no longer conspicuous there. Galiano and Valdes, however, who were exploring the Inlet at the same time as Vancouver, used an Indian name and called it "Canal de Sasamat", which at least sounds more attractive. Too late now though!

Neither the British nor the Spanish of those days were accustomed to honouring the hoi polloi by naming places after them. It was thought not to be good for them, but even the disciplinarian, Vancouver, made two exceptions. At the head of Finlayson Channel, on the upper Mainland opposite the Queen

Charlotte Islands, is Carter Bay, where lies buried a 24-year old seaman named John Carter, one of the crew of the *Discovery*. Fifteen miles north of it is Poison Cove on Mussel Inlet, named at the same time. Carter had been detailed to a boat expedition to examine the shore. In Poison Cove the men found some mussels on the sand, which they roasted for breakfast. One hour later they all fell ill and "by 1:30 p.m. poor Carter died, after pulling his oar to the last". The others recovered after drinking hot seawater as an emetic.

The other case occurred a few weeks later and farther north, when Vancouver named Betton's Island after one of his crew who was wounded in the only skirmish with Indians the explorer ever had on this coast.

Living was rough in those times, especially on board ship, but it is probable that Vancouver was sincerely concerned over the loss of Carter. Nowadays when life at sea is as comfortable as it is ashore, it is difficult to realize what men endured during those enormous voyages. Vancouver's ship, *Discovery*, was of 340 tons (most of today's ferry boats on this coast are about 4,000 tons). The other vessel under his command, the *Chatham*, was a brig of only 135 tons, not much larger than a modern seine boat. Between them they had a complement of 190 officers and men. Yet these two ludicrously tiny chunks of timber not only sailed around the globe but returned to England after 4 years and 9 months of constant travel with the loss of only one man, John Carter, who died from eating shellfish while ashore! In all the circumstances that is perhaps one of the most remarkable things about this famous expedition.

Between Cortes Island and the Mainland lies Desolation Sound, and this was named by Vancouver at the same time as the other places. This name provides one of the few indications that the intrepid mariner could occasionally be depressed by his surroundings, like the rest of us. He wrote of it: "Our residence here was truly forlorn; an awful silence pervaded the gloomy forests, whilst animated nature seemed to have deserted the neighbouring country, whose soil afforded only a few small onions, some samphire and here and there bushes bearing a scanty crop of indifferent berries. Nor was the sea more favorable to our wants, the steep rocky shores prevented the use of the seine and not a fish at the bottom could be tempted to take the hook."

QUEEN CHARLOTTE SOUND

BELLA COOLA

RIVERS INLET

BELIZE INLET

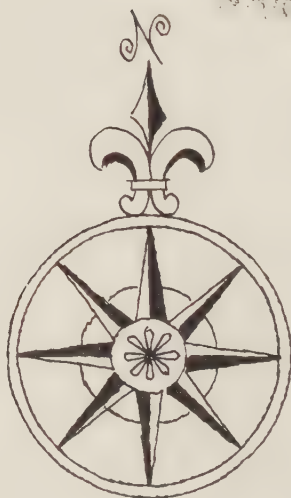
CAPE SCOTT

ALERT
BAY

PORT
ALICE

CAPE COOK

NOOTKA





The History Book Inlets

Between Burrard Inlet and Desolation Sound Vancouver had bestowed many names on places which have since become better known than the originals. First was Howe Sound, after Admiral the Rt. Hon. Richard Scrope, Earl Howe, who, two years after the place was named, became the hero of the battle of "The Glorious First of June" by defeating a large French fleet. Years later, in 1860, Captain Richards surveyed the Sound in the *Plumper* and took his cue from Vancouver. Richards made Howe Sound a record of the battle, naming every island, point, channel and even the mountains around after the ships and officers engaged on the first of June 1794. Thus Collingwood Channel is named after Admiral Lord Collingwood, and Barfleur Passage after his ship, H.M.S. *Barfleur*. Bowen Island is named after Rear Admiral James Bowen, Gambier Island after Admiral of the Fleet Lord Gambier, and Defence Island, further up the Sound, after his ship—and so on. Anvil Island is an exception. It was named by Vancouver himself because, as he wrote in his notes, "the sun shining at this time for a few minutes afforded an opportunity of ascertaining the latitude of an island which, from the shape of the mountain that composes it, obtained the name of Anvil Island".

The next inlet was called by Vancouver Jarvis Inlet after Rear Admiral Sir John Jarvis. The same thing happened as with Howe; a few years after the naming, Jarvis also was victor in a famous sea battle and was made Earl St. Vincent, after the cape in Spain off which the battle took place. Once more, Richards in the *Plumper* followed Vancouver's lead and proceeded to turn the whole region into a record of blood and battle. The Inlet winds for over forty miles amid spectacular scenery and again most of the islands and other features are named after ships and officers. Here, however, Richards commemorated two battles: that of Jarvis at Cape St. Vincent, and Nelson's Battle of the Nile the following year, 1798, which prevented Napoleon from attempting the conquest of India. Agamemnon Channel, leading to the Inlet, is named after Nelson's first battleship, Fearney Point on Nelson Island after his bargeman, Hardy Island after his captain in the *Victory* at the battle of Trafalgar, and so on.

Vancouver probed every bay and opening on the heavily indented shoreline. Look at the map and try to imagine what it must have meant to attempt even a rough charting of it for the first time. There was nothing slipshod about Vancouver's work but on this, his first visit, he did not have time for close examination, his instructions from home included an important diplomatic mission, as well as the surveying of the coast. Most of the names on today's charts came later, of course, but he visited the chief inlets, naming Bute after one earl, Loughborough after another, Rivers Inlet after an English Baron and Gordon Point after a duke of that name. Broughton Strait and the big island at the mouth of Kingcome Inlet were both named after the captain of the little ship *Chatham*. Kingcome and the snow-clad mountains which rise from its shores were not named until 1865, after an admiral of that name who was commander in chief on the Pacific station at the time.

Old Fashioned Diplomacy

In August, 1792, in Friendly Cove, Nootka Sound, Vancouver kept rendezvous with the Spanish naval officer Captain Don Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra. Captain Quadra was an explorer in his own right and had sailed as far north as what is now Alaska as early as 1775. The negotiations engaged between him and Vancouver were delicate and involved nothing less than the future ownership of today's British Columbia. War might easily have resulted had not the two men become good friends. In the event both not only behaved like perfect gentlemen but like very good diplomats, which is even more unusual. In those days diplomacy was not carried on by mutual insult, so after several weeks of parley they came to an agreement which each submitted to his Government.

When the negotiations were over, Vancouver and Quadra went on an autumn picnic together to visit the Indian chief, Maquinna. During the day Quadra suggested that, to commemorate their friendship, some place should be named after them both. Vancouver enthusiastically agreed and in his Journal writes: "Conceiving no spot so proper for this denomination as the place where we had first met, which was nearly in the centre of a tract of land that had first been circumnavigated by us, I named that country the Island of Quadra and Vancouver; with which compliment he seemed highly pleased."

The friendship between the two men was obviously genuine and not a temporary fraternization; Vancouver never mentions Quadra except in the warmest terms. A little later they met for the last time, at Monterey, California, where the Spanish Captain was host and the cordial friendship was renewed. Quadra died the following year at San Blas, Mexico.

So Far and Yet So Near

The mariners of former days did not think much of the Evergreen Playground as a winter resort. (Different now, of course.) Vancouver had called at Monterey on his way to spend the winter of 1792 in the Sandwich Isles, where fresh fruit and vegetables were available. He returned north in 1793 expecting to hear the decision of the English government regarding his negotiations with Quadra. But news travelled slowly in those days and, finding none, he continued his survey of the mainland shore of the Gulf of Georgia. It was then there occurred what is undoubtedly the most remarkable "near-miss" in the history of exploration.

In the course of his probings along the fretted coast Vancouver entered a channel bearing eastward. The cape at the S.W. entrance to it he named Edmund Point and the channel he called Burke Channel, both after the contemporary statesman and famous orator, Edmund Burke. The large island forming the northern shore of the channel he called King Island after a friend who had been a midshipman with him in Cook's *Discovery*. Towards its head the channel divides into two arms, which were named respectively North and South Bentinck Arm, after the family name of the Dukes of Portland. At the most easterly point of this remote spot Vancouver found a settlement of Indians, with whom he appears to have had an argument, and then sailed on.

A few weeks later, to the vast astonishment of the Indians, who had just seen their first white men, another white man appeared, this time from the opposite direction. He was Alexander Mackenzie, the first man to cross Canada overland, who chanced to make this same point the terminal of one of the most rugged journeys in history. So two men, both starting from the same small island half

way across the world, and both adventuring by different routes through thousands of miles of unknown territory, nearly ran into each other at the Indian village of Bella Coola. That must surely be a record in Unplanned Events Which Nearly Astonished the World!

Like his friend Quadra, Vancouver was on his last voyage, and on this occasion he sailed as far north as Alaska. He named Pitt Island after William Pitt, who became Prime Minister of Britain at 24, headed the Government for 20 years during one of the nation's most stormy periods and died at the age of 47, while the war with Napoleon still raged. The large island opposite Pitt was already called Banks Island, after Sir Joseph Banks, famous President of the Royal Society, who had accompanied Cook as naturalist on his first round-the-world voyage and was well known to Vancouver. One of the last names bestowed by Vancouver was Dundas Islands, in Dixon Entrance close to the Alaskan boundary. They were named after the Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas, a Scot who was Treasurer of the Navy in Pitt's administration and did much to improve conditions for seamen. He was also a vehement opponent of Lord North's proposition for "appeasing" the American colonists and fought every plan for reconciliation with them.

Vancouver sailed for England from Nootka in 1794. He died at the famous Star and Garter Inn on Richmond Hill, near London, in 1798 at the age of 41. There is an oil painting of him in the Legislative Building at Victoria. The city on Burrard Inlet was incorporated under his name in 1886, after it had sprung into prominence as the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The Queen and Victoria

Eighty years after James Cook discovered Nootka Sound, Queen Victoria named British Columbia. The first name proposed for the new colony between the Pacific Ocean and the Rocky Mountains was New Caledonia, but the French objected that they already had a colony bearing that name. The matter was decided by the Queen herself. In a letter dated 24th July 1858, she wrote: "The only name which is given to the whole territory in every map the Queen has consulted is 'Columbia', but as there exists also a Columbia in South

America, and the citizens of the United States call their country also Columbia, at least in poetry, 'British Columbia' might be, in the Queen's opinion, the best name."

The city of Victoria, capital of the province since the union with Canada in 1871, was named after the Queen by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had been made a present of Vancouver Island by her government in 1841. The site was known to the Songhies Indians of the neighbourhood as Camosun and the first Hudson's Bay post was called Prince Albert after the Queen's consort. This was soon changed to Fort Victoria but the "Fort" was dropped when the townsite was laid out in streets in 1852.

The east coast of Vancouver Island, between Victoria and the present Nanaimo, was not closely examined by the British until the days of the *Plumper*. One of the first Englishmen to go sight-seeing on the east coast was James Douglas, second Governor of the Island, who made a canoe trip along the shore two years after Victoria had become a town. James Island, site of the present Canadian Industries Ltd. powder plant, was named about the same time by the early settlers after this energetic Governor, James Douglas.

After that, English names came thick and fast but the origins of only a few of them are of interest in these days. Beacon Hill in Victoria's beautiful Park, was named thus by the Hudson's Bay people because they had placed two beacons on the summit as a navigation warning of Brotchie Ledge. Long before that the Indians used to set up large poles on the hill and spread nets between them to catch seafowl flying to and from the marshes.

The Worthy Captain Richards

Time now to introduce Captain George Henry Richards, who must certainly have put more names on the map than any man who ever ploughed these waters, and that was only a part of his long career. He was born in 1830, entered the British Navy at the age of 13 and died in 1900. As a lad in his teens he saw service in the Opium Wars against China and as a young man was promoted for gallantry at the storming of some forts in South America. After that, he helped survey the coasts of New Zealand and then, on a polar expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, he made one of

the most extraordinary sledge journeys on record. Between whiles, he was engaged on coastal survey in almost every part of the world. He arrived out here in 1857.

At first Richards commanded a 500 ton, 60 h.p. auxiliary steam sloop called the *Plumper*. Later he was captain of the 860 ton paddle wheel sloop *Hecate*. Both were surveying ships, and when Captain Richards could not think of a new name he just called whatever he happened to be looking at after his ship. Thus the chart is sprinkled with rocks, reefs, coves and passages called Plumper or Hecate, including the principal channel between the Queen Charlotte Islands and the mainland, named after the latter vessel. But those were his off days. He also had others when he used or revived such names as Galiano, for the island which forms one of the shores of Active Pass.

Many of the islands in the archipelago in the southern part of the Gulf were named by Captain Richards after naval officers: Mayne, Pender, Moresby, Stuart and Sidney Islands are examples. Saltspring, largest island in the lower Gulf, is a little different and marks a triumph of the local resident over the hydrographer! Douglas, on the plan of his canoe trip, called it by the Indian name "Chuan". The Hudson's Bay Company called it Saltspring after the brine springs found on it. Then Richards came along in 1859 and named it Admiral Island after his boss, Rear Admiral Baynes, Commander of the Pacific Station at the time. But the inhabitants would have none of it, and so the Geographic Board surrendered and in 1905 re-named the island Saltspring.

The diligent Captain Richards had many good qualities but it must be admitted that he was a bit of a sycophant. He was certainly determined that his Commander should not overlook the work of the *Plumper*, so, in addition to calling the Island "Admiral", he named its highest point (1,953 ft.) Baynes Mt., Ganges Harbour after the Admiral's Flagship, Fulford Harbour after its Captain, Burgoyne Bay after the Commander, Southey Point after the Admiral's secretary, Cape Keppel after a friend of the Admiral's and Mt. Bruce after the Admiral's predecessor. If the Admiral had possessed a little dog named "Spot" there would probably have been a spot named after him too! In nearby Haro Strait there is Baynes Passage and farther north, between Denman and Vancouver Islands, there is a Baynes Sound also named by Richards. Peace to the so well immortalized soul of Rear Admiral Baynes!

Richards lived until 1900, was knighted and became an Admiral himself. He had bestowed hundreds of names which will always remain on the charts but he never sought to perpetuate his own name which does not even appear on a chart. He was a jovial soul with a sense of humour and also, apparently an admirer of the novelist Dickens. Across the Gulf, at the entrance to Malaspina Strait, lie Thormanby Islands. Thormanby was the horse which won the Derby in 1860 when Richards named the islands, and all the names in the vicinity commemorate that event. Thus, Merry Island was named after the owner of the horse, Derby Point after the race itself, Epsom Point after the place where it is run, Surrey Island because Epsom is in the County of Surrey, Tattenham Ledge denotes the famous bend on the race course, Buccaneer Bay after another famous horse of the day, and so on. From the fact that the Pass to the east of the islands is called Welcome to celebrate the welcome news we may suspect that somebody in the ship's company had won a pot on the race and had promised a celebration.

Farther north Captain Richards called another small group of islands the Bunsby Islands, after Captain John Bunsby, a humourous character in Charles Dickens' novel "Dombey and Son". The novel had only been published twelve years and perhaps Richards was reading it during the trip. Anyhow he named Cautious Point and Clara Inlet after Bunby's brig, the *Cautious Clara*. Gay Passage and Cuttle Group are also called after characters in the same novel, the latter after Bunsby's friend, Captain Cuttle, whose favourite expression was "when found make a note on".

Captain Richards often adopted a theme, as it were, in this way. Another example is Hornby Island, the holiday resort a few miles west of Thormanby Islands. This had been named by officers of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1850, after Rear Admiral Geoffrey Phipps Hornby of H.M.S. *Tribune*. When Richards surveyed it ten years later, Hornby and his ship became his "theme". He named the mountain on the island Mt. Geoffrey (1,090 ft.) after one of the Admiral's middle names, and Phipps Point after the other. The largest bay he called Tribune after the ship; Downes, St. John, Norman and Dunlop Points were named after lieutenants aboard her, and Norris Rock, off Norman Point, was called after the Master of the vessel.

Nanaimo

The history of Nanaimo is short but interesting. The name derives from Sne-ny-mo, which was the Indian name for a kind of loose confederacy of five bands of local Indians. Sne-ny-mo is said to mean "the whole" or "a big strong tribe".

Nanaimo was for years the coal port of Vancouver Island. The story is that coal was discovered there in 1849 by some Indians who were digging for clams in what is now the centre of the city. One of them uncovered some black rock which felt light in weight. Wondering if it would burn, the Indian put a chunk on the camp fire. The others gathered round and there were loud grunts of satisfaction as the flames licked it up and the heat came forth. This enterprising Indian later visited Victoria and recognized the same kind of rock in a blacksmith's forge. He was astonished to learn that the stone had been brought from across the sea and was of great value. He promised the white men that, for a reward, he would bring them a whole canoe load of the stuff, which he did. Three years later the good ship *Cadboro* left Winterhuysen Inlet with the first load of coal, 480 barrels of it, consigned to Victoria 70 miles away.

Departure Bay, present terminus of the Black Ball Line, was named in 1853 by officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, presumably because it was from there that their ship sailed for the northern posts. They also named Northumberland Channel and Newcastle Island about the same time, the former after the Fourth Duke of Northumberland, who was then First Lord of the Admiralty, and the second after the English coal city of Newcastle-on-Tyne, which they hoped Nanaimo would emulate in importance.

As the C.P.R. ferry approaches the dock at Nanaimo, a small headland can be seen forming the western shore of Northumberland Channel opposite Gabriola Island. This little cape is shown on the chart as Jack Point, and thereby hangs a tale.

It is named after Jack Dolholt, a salty old character well known on the coast who died in Nanaimo in 1905. Jack was a Norwegian who jumped ship in San Francisco and joined the rush to the Fraser gold fields about a hundred years ago. Failing to make his fortune by panning gold, he took to the sea again and became owner and master of a small schooner trading in coal and lumber. Dolholt was well known, they say, for his own ability to carry a heavy cargo of

liquid, and for his astonishing fluency in the more common terms of endearment used among sailors. Furthermore, having been born to the storms of the west coast of Norway, Jack was never bothered by anything the Gulf could blow up.

One dirty day in mid-winter, 1861, Jack Dolholt sailed out of Victoria in his schooner, the *Victoria Packet*, bound for Nanaimo. He had a full cargo and seven passengers aboard, and a boy called Charlie for all his crew. Of course rumour said afterwards that Jack had been "taking his tea too strong" but however that may be, once outside the harbour, he felt the need for a little repose, so he turned over the wheel to Charlie and went below. After a few hours rest he came on deck again to take over, chasing Charlie away. As the lad staggered forward on the heaving deck he tripped over a coil of rope and went overboard. Jack saw him go and was shocked sober. Bawling to a passenger to take over the wheel, he grabbed a skiff, somehow lowered it into the rough sea and was gone to the rescue. The little rowboat was of course soon hidden by the waves and they saw no more of Dolholt for a long time. The unfortunate passengers had their own problems, but eventually, by much hard work and even more good luck, they managed to anchor the schooner in a small bay and go ashore.

While they were still wondering what to do next, Jack turned up in his skiff, swearing sadly at the loss of his poor young mate, of whom he had found no trace. But as for "what next", Dolholt had no doubts at all—all aboard, of course, and away to Nanaimo! But to Jack's indignant surprise, this suggestion caused head-shaking among his passengers. Finally five of them decided that they had tempted fortune enough for one trip and elected to hike back through the bush to Victoria. Dolholt and the remaining two passengers went on alone, skudding northward before the gale with Jack again at the wheel, and of course, he made it.

Later Dolholt took up land on the headland in Nanaimo Harbour and settled there. He had chosen well for after he got title to the property he was able to sell the coal rights to the mining company and live on the proceeds. Later Captain Richards came along in his survey ship and put the little cape on the chart as Sharp Point. But the name would not stick. For everybody knew it as Jack Point, and at the next re-charting, that name became official.

The Saga of Jemmy Jones

Dolholt's story recalls another colorful character of the same period, who would have been even more astonished to know that his name would long survive him.

In Cadboro Bay, near Victoria, lies Jemmy Jones Island, called after a redoubtable Welshman of that name known far and wide as just "Jemmy". He, too, left Europe for California and the gold rush, and then had come north to add to the gaiety of life in B.C. But Jemmy, besides being a fine seaman, was also a reckless adventurer who would try anything once, if not more. For years he was in and out of trouble, and gaols, up and down the coast. Jemmy built his own boats, four of them in succession, and traded in them between Vancouver Island and Puget Sound ports. One of these vessels burned at sea, another capsized and threw him and his passengers (two of them women) into the water, and a third, the *Carolina*, ran aground on the island now named after her builder.

His most famous ship, however, was the *Jenny Jones*, named after his wife (maybe). At first she was a sailing schooner but later Jones fitted her with auxiliary steam power and traded with her between Portland and B.C. ports. Her last and most famous voyage began early in 1865 when Jemmy himself had been clapped into gaol in Victoria for debt. He soon escaped from prison, but found to his disgust that the mate had taken his ship over to the American side. With the help of friends, he procured a woman's dress and bonnet and in that unlikely garb set out across the Strait of Juan de Fuca in a canoe!

Arrived there, he found that his vessel was in the hands of the United States Marshall at Olympia, some of his American creditors having followed the example of his Canadian ones. So off Jemmy went to Olympia, this time, presumably, dressed as a man, and when his ship was sent to Seattle to be sold, he went with her as a "passenger". Arrived in Seattle, the ship was made fast for the night and the Marshall, not liking his quarters aboard, went ashore to the hotel. In the morning the Marshall's assistant went ashore also, to call his superior, and then Jemmy showed his nerve. He simply cast off and steamed away into the Sound!

Audacity will take a man far, but Jemmy's plight was not a happy one. The police on both sides of the Line were after him; there was practically nothing aboard to eat—just one sack of flour, a few pounds of sugar and a little tea. Worst of all, he had only sufficient fuel for a forty mile run. Just as this meagre allowance was exhausted, he reached Port Ludlow, where he managed to get enough wood to carry him on to Nanaimo. There he scrounged a small supply of provisions, but his credit would not run to coal. He therefore crossed the bay to Newcastle Island where he persuaded some Indians to help him scoop up and load a few tons of coal dust which had been lying there for years. With this he steamed for the mainland, hoping to get wood to mix with the coal dust and thus enable him to proceed round the northern end of Vancouver Island to Mexico, like the Spaniards of old.

According to a contemporary report in the *Victoria Colonist*, Jemmy had reached somewhere above Seymour Narrows when he fell in with a sloop which had sprung a leak. Jemmy generously offered to take her in tow. He was enchanted to find that the sloop was on a trading trip and was loaded with goods of all kinds, including lots of provisions. Jemmy set to work to convert the three men aboard her to his own view of things, and succeeded so well that they soon agreed to strip and abandon the leaking ship. She was found later, stranded and bottom up, and taken to Nanaimo.

Thus, well-manned and equipped, Jemmy rounded the Island, making for the open sea and, after 25 days under steam and sail, he put in at San Blas. Here Jones paid his crew their wages and allowed them \$625 for the sloop and her cargo. From San Blas he made a profitable freight run to Mazatlan, also in Mexico, but by then the crew's conversion had worn thin and they wanted more money. One of them even demanded \$1,000, and made application to the U.S. Consul to have the vessel seized, pending payment. The action failed and the *Jenny Jones* was released, but on taking over again the owner found that one of the men had unshipped and hidden the rudder. This un-seamanlike conduct, after so many other annoyances, disgusted Mr. Jones, and he sold the ship to the Mexicans for \$10,000 and headed north for San Francisco. There he was promptly arrested for stealing his own ship from the Marshall months before in Seattle. But his old luck had returned. The Judge had a sense of humour and ruled for the prisoner's discharge because, he said, Jemmy had not

left the Marshall, on the contrary, the Marshall had left Jemmy, for a hotel room.

And so the wanderer returned to B.C., where he bought another small schooner in which, incidentally, he was nearly drowned by her swamping near Trial Island outside Victoria. Jemmy Jones is said to have had a remarkable memory, especially for business matters. He needed it, for he could neither read nor write.

Here and There

In Barkley Sound, there is another island with tentacles going back into the past. It is Bligh Island, named after Vice-Admiral "Bread Fruit Bligh", the martinet whose harsh treatment of his men provoked the mutiny on the *Bounty* and ended by his being turned adrift in a small boat with eighteen others. With no chart they sailed over 3,600 miles before reaching land. And on Bligh Island, too, is Resolution Cove, in which Captain Cook's little vessels, the *Resolution* and *Discovery* stayed a month to refit during his third and last voyage around the world, with midshipman Vancouver as one of the company.

There is also a place with no "history" at all, but which spreads its name as widely as any. It is Powell River, some 70 miles up the mainland coast from Vancouver. The town has adopted the name of the Lake behind it, for there were no houses for miles around when the Lake was named for Israel Wood Powell, M.D., who was Indian Commissioner in B.C. at the end of the last century. The worthy Mr. Powell did not, by his own efforts, carve his name deeply into the scroll of fame, but today it is carried on newsprint all over the world. Hundreds of thousands of rolls of paper go off from this place each year to the ends of the earth.

Then there is Mt. Arrowsmith (5,976 ft.) seen by every traveller on Vancouver Island north of Nanaimo. It should have been called Mt. Indian Head because, from some aspects, it resembles a man's head looking up to the sky, far more than the famous "Lions" above Vancouver resemble the king of beasts.

However, about 1853, it somehow got itself called after Aaron Arrowsmith and his nephew John, who were English cartographers of such excellence that in their day their name was synonymous with everything clever and accurate in map making.

Finally there is one name on our British Columbia charts which is probably a record, it is a word beginning with "Q" but not followed by "U". Stevens Island, near the northern extremity of the Queen Charlotte Islands, has a small bay called Qlawdzeet Anchorage. This tongue twister is the old Tsimpsian Indian name for the bay, and means "the place of the hissing sound". It was called thus from the sound made by clams squirting up liquid through the sand. It is the "zeet" bit which is supposed to sound like a busy clam. The local inhabitants, however, have long since given up trying to talk like a shellfish, and just call the place "Squadaree".

And so it goes, up and down the coast. New names are still being put on the charts, even today, but it is no longer a case of sending out a survey ship and allowing the Captain to pop on the map any name that he fancies. Today names are chosen carefully by the Canadian Hydrographic Service of the Federal Department of Mines and Resources, and with due regard for both history and local considerations.



For that matter most of today's changes are made to eliminate duplications elsewhere. There have been too many Seal Islands

and Grey Rocks and suchlike, which might confuse radio operators, or perhaps cause strangers to these waters to think they were miles off course. Even so, the Department has to beware of verbal brickbats from local inhabitants with a fondness for what they grew up with. But there is no end to the queer names and queer stories about them and, in some cases, no end to the arguments as to how they got their names.



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